Excerpts From the Book of Commandments

1833 Edition

Containing Chapters II, IV, IX, XV

CHAPTER II

A Revelation given to Joseph, in Harmony, Pennsylvania, July, 1828, after Martin had lost the Manuscript of the forepart of the book of Mormon, translated from the book of Lehi, which was abridged by the hand of Mormon, saying:

1 The works, and the designs, and the purposes of God, can not be frustrated, neither can they come to nought, for God doth not walk in crooked paths; neither doth he turn to the right hand nor to the left; neither doth he vary from that which he hath said: Therefore his paths are strait and his course is one eternal round.

2 Remember, remember, that it is not the work of God that is frustrated, but the work of men: for although a man may have many revelations, and have power to do many mighty works, yet, if he boasts in his own strength, and sets at nought the counsels of God, and follows after the dictates of his own will, and carnal desires, he must fall and incur the vengeance of a just God upon him.

3 Behold, you have been in-trusted with these things, but how strict were your commandments; and remember, also, the promises which were made to you, if you did not transgress them; and behold, how oft you have transgressed the commandments and the laws of God, and have gone on in the persuasions of men: for behold, you should not have feared man more than God, although men set at naught the counsels of God, and despise his words, yet you should have been faithful and he would have extended his arm, and supported you against all the fiery darts of the adversary; and he would have been with you in every time of trouble.

4 Behold thou art Joseph, and thou wast chosen to do the work of the Lord, but because of transgression, if thou art not aware thou wilt fall, but remember God is merciful: Therefore, repent of that which thou hast done, and he will only cause thee to be afflicted for a season, and thou art still chosen, and wilt again be called to the work; and except thou do this, thou shalt be delivered up and become as other men, and have no more gift.

5 And when thou deliveredst up that which God had given thee sight and power to translate, thou deliveredst up that which was sacred, into the hands of a wicked man, who has set at nought the counsels of God, and has broken the most sacred promises, which were made before God, and has depended upon his own judgment, and boasted in his own wisdom, and this is the reason that thou hast lost thy privileges for a season, for thou hast suffered the counsel of thy director to be trampled upon from the beginning.

6 Nevertheless, my work shall go forth and accomplish my purposes, for as the knowledge of a Savior has come into the world, even so shall the knowledge of my people, the Nephites, and the Jacobites, and the Josephites, and the Zoramites, come to the knowledge of the Lamanites, and the Lemuelites and the Ishmaelites, which dwindled in unbelief, because of the iniquities of their fathers, who have been suffered to destroy their brethren, because of their iniquities, and their abominations: and for this very purpose are these plates preserved which contain these records, that the promises of the Lord might be fulfilled, which he made to his people; and that the Lamanites might come to the knowledge of their fathers, and that they might know the promises of the Lord, and that they may believe the gospel and rely upon the merits of Jesus Christ, and be glorified through faith in his name; and that through their repentance they might be saved: Amen.

CHAPTER IV

A Revelation given to Joseph and Martin, in Harmony, Pennsylvania, March, 1829, when Martin desired of the Lord to know whether Joseph had, in his possession, the record of the Nephites.

1 Behold, I say unto you, that my servant Martin has desired a witness from my hand, that my servant Joseph has got the things of which he has testified, and borne record that he has received of me.

2 And now, behold, this shall you say unto him:—I the Lord am God, and I have given these things unto my servant Joseph, and I have commanded him that he should stand as a witness of these things, nevertheless I have caused him that he should enter into a covenant with me, that he should not show them except I command him, and he has no power over them except I grant it unto him; and he has a gift to translate the book, and I have commanded him that he shall pretend to no other gift, for I will grant him no other gift.

3 And verily I say unto you, that wo shall come unto the inhabitants of the earth, if they will not hearken unto my words, for, behold, if they will not believe my words, they would not believe my servant Joseph, if it were possible that he could show them all things. O ye unbelieving, ye stiffnecked generation, mine anger is kindled against you!

4 Behold, verily I say, I have reserved the things of which I have spoken, which I have intrusted to my servant, for a wise purpose in me, and it shall be made known unto future generations: But this generation shall have my words, yea and the testimony of three of my servants shall go forth with my words unto this generation; yea, three shall know of a surety that these things are true, for I will give them power, that they may behold and view these things as they are, and to none else will I grant this power, to receive this same testimony among this generation. And the testimony of three witnesses will I send forth and my word, and behold, whosoever believeth in my word, them will I visit with the manifestation of my Spirit, and they shall be born of me, and their testimony shall also go forth.

5 And thus, if the people of this generation harden not their hearts, I will work a reformation among them, and I will put down all lyings, and deceivings, and priestcrafts, and envyings, and strifes, and idolatries, and sorceries, and all manner of iniquities, and I will establish my church, like unto the church which was taught by my disciples in the days of old.

6 And now if this generation do harden their hearts against my word, behold I will deliver them up unto satan, for he reigneth and hath much power at this time, for he hath got great hold upon the hearts of the people of this generation: and not far from the iniquities of Sodom and Gomorrah, do they come at this time: and behold the sword of justice hangeth over their heads, and if they persist in the hardness of their hearts, the time cometh that it must fall upon them. Behold I tell you these things even as I also told the people of the distruction of Jerusalem, and my word shall be verified at this time as it hath hitherto been verified.

7 And now I command my servant Joseph to repent, and walk more uprightly before me, and yield to the persuasions of men no more; and that he be firm in keeping the commandments wherewith I have commanded him; and if he doeth this, behold I grant unto him eternal life, even if he should be slain.

8 And now I speak again concerning the man that desireth a witness: behold I say unto him, he exalteth himself and doth not humble himself sufficiently before me, but if he will go out and bow down before me, and humble himself in mighty prayer and faith, in the sincerity of his heart, then will I grant unto him a view of the things which he desireth to know: and then he shall say unto the people of this generation, behold I have seen the things and I know of a surety that they are true, for I have seen them, and they have been shown unto me by the power of God and not of man. And I command him that he shall say no more unto them, concerning these things, except he shall say, I have seen them, and they have been shown unto me by the power of God.

9 And these are the words which he shall say.— But if he deny this he will break the covenant which he has before covenanted with me, and behold he is condemned. And now except he humble himself and acknowledge unto me the things that he has done, which are wrong, and covenant with me that he will keep my commandments, and exercise faith in me, behold I say unto him, he shall have no such views, for I will grant unto him no views of the things of which I have spoken. And if this be the case, I command him that he shall do no more, nor trouble me any more concerning this matter.

10 And if this be the case, behold I say unto you, Joseph, when thou hast translated a few more pages, thou shalt stop for a season, even until I command thee again: then thou mayest translate again. And except thou do this, behold thou shalt have no more gift, and I will take away the things which I have in-trusted with thee.

11 And now, because I foresee the lying in wait to destroy thee: Yea, I foresee that if my servant humbleth not himself, and receive a witness from my hand, that he will fall into transgression; and there are many that lie in wait to destroy thee from off the face of the earth: And for this cause, that thy days may be prolonged, I have given unto thee these commandments; yea, for this cause I have said, stop and stand still until I command thee, and I will provide means whereby thou mayest accomplish the thing which I have commanded thee; and if thou art faithful in keeping my commandments, thou shalt be lifted up at the last day:— Amen.

CHAPTER IX

A Revelation given to Joseph, in Harmony, Pennsylvania, May, 1829, informing him of the alteration of the manuscript of the fore part of the Book Of Mormon.

1 Now, behold I say unto you, that because you delivered up so many writings, which you had power to translate, into the hands of a wicked man, you have lost them, and you also lost your gift at the same time, nevertheless it has been restored unto you again: therefore, see that you are faithful and go on unto the finishing of the remainder of the work as you have begun. Do not run faster then you have strength and means provided to translate, but be diligent unto the end, that you may come off conquerer; yea, that you may conquer satan, and those that do uphold his work.

2 Behold they have sought to destroy you; yea, even the man in whom you have trusted, and for this cause I said, that he is a wicked man, for he has sought to take away the things wherewith you have been in-trusted; and he has also sought to destroy your gift, and because you have delivered the writings into his hands, behold they have taken them from you: therefore, you have delivered them up; yea, that which was sacred unto wickedness. And behold, satan has put it into their hearts to alter the words which you have caused to be written, or which you have translated, which have gone out of your hands; and behold I say unto you, that because they have altered the words, they read contrary from that which you translated and caused to be written; and on this wise the devil has sought to lay a cunning plan, that he may destroy this work; for he has put it into their hearts to do this, that by lying they may say they have caught you in the words which you have pretended to translate.

3 Verily I say unto you, that I will not suffer that satan shall accomplish his evil design in this thing, for behold he has put it into their hearts to tempt the Lord their God; for behold they say in their hearts, We will see if God has given him power to translate, if so, he will also give him power again; and if God giveth him power again, or if he translate again, or in other words, if he bringeth forth the same words, behold we have the same with us, and we have altered them: Therefore, they will not agree, and we will say that he has lied in his words, and that he has no gift, and that he has no power: therefore, we will destroy him, and also the work, and we will do this that we may not be ashamed in the end, and that we may get glory of the world.

4 Verily, verily I say unto you, that satan has great hold upon their hearts; he stirreth them up to do iniquity against that which is good, that he may lead their souls to destruction, and thus he has laid a cunning plan to destroy the work of God; yea, he stirreth up their hearts to anger against this work; yea, he saith unto them, Deceive and lie in wait to catch, that ye may destroy: behold this is no harm, and thus he flattereth them and telleth them that it is no sin to lie, that they may catch a man in a lie, that they may destroy him, and thus he flattereth them, and leadeth them along until he draggeth their souls down to hell; and thus he causeth them to catch themselves in their own snare; and thus he goeth up and down, to and fro in the earth, seeking to destroy the souls of men.

5 Verily, verily I say unto you, wo be unto him that lieth to decieve, because he supposeth that another lieth to decieve, for such are not exempt from the justice of God.

6 Now, behold they have altered those words, because satan saith unto them, He hath decieved you, and thus he flattereth them away to do iniquity, to tempt the Lord their God.

7 Behold I say unto you, that you shall not translate again those words which have gone forth out of your hands; for behold, they shall not lie any more against those words; for behold, if you should bring forth the same words, they would say that you have lied; that you have pretended to translate, but that you have contradicted your words; and behold they would publish this, and satan would harden the hearts of the people, to stir them up to anger against you, that they might not believe my words: thus satan would overpower this generation, that the work might not come forth in this generation: but behold here is wisdom, and because I show unto you wisdom, and give you commandments concerning these things, what you shall do, show it not unto the world until you have accomplished the work.

8 Marvel not that I said unto you, here is wisdom, show it not unto the world, for I said, show it not unto the world, that you may be preserved. Behold I do not say that you shall not show it unto the righteous; but as you cannot always judge the righteous, or as you cannot always tell the wicked from the righteous: therefore, I say unto you, hold your peace until I shall see fit to make all things known unto the world concerning the matter.

9 And now, verily I say unto you, that an account of those things that you have written, which have gone out of your hands, are engraven upon the plates of Nephi; yea, and you remember, it was said in those writings, that a more particular account was given of these things upon the plates of Nephi.

10 And now, because the account which is engraven upon the plates of Nephi, is more particular concerning the things, which in my wisdom I would bring to the knowledge of the people in this account: therefore, you shall translate the engravings which are on the plates of Nephi, down even till you come to the reign of king Benjamin, or until you come to that which you have translated, which you have retained; and behold, you shall publish it as the record of Nephi, and thus I will confound those who have altered my words. I will not suffer that they shall destroy my work; yea, I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.

11 Behold they have only got a part, or an abridgment of the account of Nephi. Behold there are many things engraven on the plates of Nephi, which do throw greater views upon my gospel: therefore, it is wisdom in me, that you should translate this first part of the engravings of Nephi, and send forth in this work. And behold, all the remainder of this work, does contain all those parts of my gospel which my holy prophets; yea, and also my disciples desired in their prayers, should come forth unto this people. And I said unto them, that it should be granted unto them according to their faith in their prayers; yea, and this was their faith, that my gospel which I gave unto them, that they might preach in their days, might come unto their brethren, the Lamanites, and also, all that had become Lamanites, because of their dissensions.

12 Now this is not all, their faith in their prayers were, that this gospel should be made known also, if it were possible that other nations should possess this land; and thus they did leave a blessing upon this land in their prayers, that whosoever should believe in this gospel, in this land, might have eternal life; yea, that it might be free unto all of whatsoever nation, kindred, tongue, or people, they may be.

13 And now, behold, according to their faith in their prayers, will I bring this part of my gospel to the knowledge of my people. Behold, I do not bring it to destroy that which they have received, but to build it up.

14 And for this cause have I said, if this generation harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them. Now I do not say this to destroy my church, but I say this to build up my church: therefore, whosoever belongeth to my church need not fear, for such shall inherit the kingdom of heaven: but it is they who do not fear me, neither keep my commandments, but buildeth up churches unto themselves, to get gain; yea, and all those that do wickedly, and buildeth up the kingdom of the devil; yea, verily, verily I say unto you, that it is they that I will disturb, and cause to tremble and shake to the centre.

15 Behold, I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God: I came unto my own, and my own received me not. I am the light which shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. I am he who said other sheep have I which are not of this fold, unto my disciples, and many there were that understood me not.

16 And I will show unto this people, that I had other sheep, and that they were a branch of the house of Jacob; and I will bring to light their marvelous works, which they did in my name; yea, and I will also bring to light my gospel, which was ministered unto them, and behold they shall not deny that which you have received, but they shall build it up, and shall bring to light the true points of my doctrine: Yea, and the only doctrine which is in me; and this I do, that I may establish my gospel, that there may not be so much contention: Yea, satan doth stir up the hearts of the people to contention, concerning the points of my doctrine; and in these things they do err, for they do wrest the scriptures, and do not understand them: therefore, I will unfold unto them this great mystery, for behold, I will gather them as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, if they will not harden their hearts: Yea, if they will come, they may, and partake of the waters of life freely.

17 Behold this is my doctrine: whosoever repenteth, and cometh unto me, the same is my church: whosoever declareth more or less than this, the same is not of me, but is against me: therefore, he is not of my church.

18 And now, behold whosoever is of my church, and endureth of my church to the end, him will I establish upon my Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them.

19 And now, remember the words of him who is the life and the light of the world, your Redeemer, your Lord and your God: Amen.

CHAPTER XV

A Revelation to Joseph, Oliver and David, making known the calling of twelve disciples in these last days, and also, instructions relative to building up the church of Christ, according to the fulness of the gospel: Given in Fayette, New-York, June, 1829.

1 Now behold, because of the thing which you have desired to know of me, I give unto you these words:

2 Behold I have manifested unto you, by my Spirit in many instances, that the things which you have written are true:

3 Wherefore you know that they are true; and if you know that they are true, behold I give unto you a commandment, that you rely upon the things which are written; for in them are all things written, concerning my church, my gospel, and my rock.

4 Wherefore if you shall build up my church, and my gospel, and my rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you.

5 Behold the world is ripening in iniquity, and it must needs be, that the children of men are stirred up unto repentance, both the Gentiles, and also the house of Israel:

6 Wherefore as thou hast been baptized by the hand of my servant, according to that which I have commanded him:

7 Wherefore he hath fulfilled the thing which I commanded him.

8 And now marvel not that I have called him unto mine own purpose, which purpose is known in me:

9 Wherefore if he shall be diligent in keeping my commandments, he shall be blessed unto eternal life, and his name is Joseph.

10 And now Oliver, I speak unto you, and also unto David, by the way of commandment:

11 For behold, I command all men every where to repent, and I speak unto you, even as unto Paul mine apostle, for you are called even with that same calling with which he was called.

12 Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God:

13 For behold the Lord your God suffered death in the flesh: wherefore he suffered the pain of all men, that all men might repent and come unto him.

14 And he hath risen again from the dead, that he might bring all men unto him on conditions of repentance.

15 And how great is his joy in the soul that repenteth.

16 Wherefore you are called to cry repentance unto this people.

17 And if it so be that you should labor in all your days, in crying repentance unto this people, and bring save it be one soul only unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father?

18 And now if your joy will be great with one soul, that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy, if you should bring many souls unto me?

19 Behold you shall have my gospel before you, and my rock, and my salvation:

20 Ask the Father in my name in faith believing that you shall receive, and you shall have the Holy Ghost which manifesteth all things, which is expedient unto the children of men.

21 And if you have not faith, hope and charity, you can do nothing.

22 Contend against no church, save it be the church of the devil.

23 Take upon you the name of Christ, and speak the truth in soberness, and as many as repent, and are baptized in my name, which is Jesus Christ, and endure to the end, the same shall be saved.

24 Behold Jesus Christ is the name which is given of the Father, and there is none other name given whereby man can be saved:

25 Wherefore all men must take upon them the name which is given of the Father, for in that name shall they be called at the last day:

26 Wherefore if they know not the name by which they are called, they cannot have place in the kingdom of my Father.

27 And now behold, there are others which are called to declare my gospel, both unto Gentile and unto Jew: Yea, even unto twelve:

28 And the twelve shall be my disciples, and they shall take upon them my name:

29 And the twelve are they which shall desire to take upon them my name, with full purpose of heart:

30 And if they desire to take upon them my name, with full purpose of heart, they are called to go into all the world to preach my gospel unto every creature:

31 And they are they which are ordained of me to baptize in my name, according to that which is written; and you have that which is written before you:

32 Wherefore you must perform it according to the words which are written.

33 And now I speak unto the twelve:

34 Behold my grace is sufficient for you: You must walk uprightly before me and sin not.

35 And behold you are they which are ordained of me to ordain priests and teachers to declare my gospel, according to the power of the Holy Ghost which is in you, and according to the callings and gifts of God unto men:

36 And I Jesus Christ, your Lord and your God, have spoken it.

37 These words are not of men, nor of man, but of me:

38 Wherefore you shall testify they are of me, and not of man; for it is my voice which speaketh them unto you:

39 For they are given by my Spirit unto you:

40 And by my power you can read them one to another; and save it were by my power, you could not have them:

41 Wherefore you can testify that you have heard my voice, and know my words.

42 And now behold I give unto you, Oliver, and also unto David, that you shall search out the twelve which shall have the desires of which I have spoken; and by their desires and their works, you shall know them:

43 And when you have found them you shall show these things unto them.

44 And you shall fall down and worship the Father in my name:

45 And you must preach unto the world, saying, you must repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ:

46 For all men must repent and be baptized; and not only men, but women and children, which have arriven to the years of accountability.

47 And now, after that you have received this, you must keep my commandments in all things:

48 And by your hands I will work a marvelous work among the children of men, unto the convincing of many of their sins, that they may come unto repentance; and that they may come unto the kingdom of my Father:

49 Wherefore the blessings which I give unto you are above all things.

50 And after that you have received this, if you keep not my commandments, you cannot be saved in the kingdom of my Father.

Behold I Jesus Christ, your Lord and your God, and your Redeemer, by the power of my Spirit, have spoken it. Amen.